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ABSTRACT

Teaching English composition and interpersonal communication concurrently enhances students' opportunities to learn and apply communication skills. Since many of these skills are common to both courses of study, not only is learning reinforced, but the skills can be presented and practiced in a variety of ways. More important, English composition and interpersonal communication are exceptionally suited to using the strengths while compensating for the limitations of the other course. A team-taught interdisciplinary course can magnify and enhance the learning of communication skills in the following ways. First, interpersonal communication is inherently relevant to students: they possess a lifetime of firsthand knowledge (such as self-concept, emotions, perceptions, and personal relationships). Teaching the process of writing provides students with a method to discover, cultivate, order, and express what they think and feel. Second, "thinking on paper" encourages students to develop a personal and profound understanding of their perceptions, feelings, attitudes, behaviors, and relationships. Third, to complete written assignments, students must selectively apply interpersonal communication skills, and test and modify their behaviors in contexts outside the classroom. Fourth, team-teaching provides added opportunities to respond promptly and appropriately to student needs, and to practice interpersonal skills in the classroom. Fifth, students gain confidence and proficiency as they comprehend, practice, and improve both interpersonal and composing skills in the varied and difficult tasks they set for themselves. (Author/HTH)

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Program

Writing and Speaking: Old Bedfellows, Not So Strange

"Composition and Interpersonal Communication: How Tight the Fit?"

presented by--

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CS 505 232

Abstract for

"Composition and Interpersonal Communication: How Tight the Fit?"

Teaching English Composition and Interpersonal Communication concurrently enhancesstudents' opportunities to learn and apply communication skills. Since many of these skills are common to both courses of study, not only is learning reinforced, but the skills can be presented and practiced in a variety of ways. Even more importantly, English Composition and Interpersonal Communication are exceptionally suited to utilizing the strengths, while compensating for the limitations, of the other course.

1) Interpersonal Communication is inherently relevant to students: they possess a lifetime of firsthand knowledge (self-concept, emotions, perceptions, personal relationships). Teaching the process of writing provides students with a method to discover, cultivate, order, and express what they think and feel.

2) "Thinking on paper" encourages students to develop a personal and profound understanding of their perceptions, feelings, attitudes, behaviors, and relationships.

3) To complete written assignments, students must selectively apply interpersonal communication skills, test and modify their behaviors in contexts outside the classroom.

4) Team-teaching provides added opportunities to respond promptly and appropriately to student needs and to practice interpersonal skills in the classroom.

5) Students gain confidence and proficiency as they comprehend, practice, and improve both interpersonal and composing skills in the varied and difficult tasks they set for themselves.

Teachers of English Composition and Interpersonal Communication face a recurring challenge. Each term they rethink and rework the complex puzzle of how best to foster the growth of students' communication skills. The learning process is most effective when students are provided with the following opportunities: 1) to reflect on and recognize the relevance of communication skills to their experiences and needs, 2) to investigate and attempt new skills privately and with the support and direction of an instructor, 3) to test and practice communication skills independently, outside the classroom in contexts of their own choosing, 4) to obtain timely, professional responses to their individual efforts, and 5) to gain confidence and increasing proficiency in the use of communication skills.

As desirable and even vital as these opportunities are, perhaps no course structure accommodates them all. Course parameters of time and content restrict and even exclude some parts of the learning process. Both courses, when taught alone, have serious limitations which inhibit them from providing optimal learning situations. Fortunately, the contours of Composition and Interpersonal Communication do complement one another in many ways and, when carefully fitted together, can augment the learning experience. When English Composition and Interpersonal Communication combine, how tight the fit?

Each step of the learning process summarized above will be examined in detail to assess the interrelatedness of the courses and to demonstrate that team-teaching them can both magnify and enhance the learning of communication skills.

1) Interpersonal Communication's most conspicuous strength, the inherent relevance of course content to student needs and experiences, compensates for limiting features in Composition. While English Composition also has a valuable content, it is not a content or body of knowledge that generates or is the focus of student compositions. In some minds, the content is mistakenly diminished to grammar, syntax, and transcription (spelling and punctuation). Of course written communication, like oral communication, is more profound than this. To communicate effectively in writing, one must think clearly, perceptively. Teaching the writing process is, pre-eminently, teaching a thinking process. This, however, is not a content that readily generates composition topics for students.

Another difficulty that confronts English Composition is the perceived irrelevance of composing skills. Some college students write occasional letters; a few compose poems or keep journals; fewer yet write at work. Most students write very little, often only for the rare teacher who assigns it.

In these courses, students usually write to demonstrate their understanding of a subject the teacher knows far better. When asked to write of their own experiences, perceptions, and ideas, students have little confidence that they have anything to say. Certainly not to the teacher. While they have been told repeatedly that learning to write proficiently is important, students find it difficult to believe.

When writing is conceived of as a mere tool to transmit information, it is denied a fundamental strength: writing's potential to cultivate and order our thoughts. Writing "separates our ideas from ourselves in a way that is easiest for us to examine, explore, and develop. Writing permits ideas and events to be created and manipulated in ways that would not exist if all language had to be as transient as thought or spoken words. . . . [There is] an important difference between writing and speech; not only can writing separate the producer of language from its recipient in time and place, with the possibility of reflection and review, but writing can also separate the producer from him or herself, so that one's own ideas can be examined more objectively. Writers can look at the language they produce in a way that speakers cannot" (Frank Smith, Writing and the Writer). The permanence of writing allows students to examine what they and others have written and to learn how to cultivate and to order their thoughts more skillfully.

Composition, then, provides students with opportunities for improving their thinking/writing skills: expressing verbally their sensations, feelings, perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs; discovering new ideas and combining information creatively; perceiving patterns and relationships in words; supporting perceptions and opinions with specific examples, facts, and illustrations; defining, explaining, comparing and contrasting, analyzing, synthesizing, summarizing, classifying, elaborating, specifying, integrating, using induction and deduction; negotiating a coherent point of view by interrelating self, topic, and audience; establishing credibility; evoking desired responses in an audience; in short, recognizing and exercising the power of their minds.

When the two courses are taught together, Interpersonal Communication provides content, a ready source for student compositions: self-content, emotions, perceptions, relationships, intercultural and nonverbal communication are endlessly fascinating and engaging subjects. These are subject matters in which students already possess useful knowledge, a lifetime of firsthand experiences and observations which are constant sources of self-confidence when they write. They examine their own self-concept, express their feelings, report their perceptions, and analyze their relationships with insights and an authority available to no one else. (Writing assignment list appended.)

Paradoxically, Interpersonal Communication's wealth of content and its varied appeals often interfere with learning. So many elements of the course impact so intimately on students' lives that they are inundated, unsure of where to put forth their efforts or how to manage this flood of knowledge. The act of writing, though, provides students with opportunities to reflect on, digest, and penetrate the complexities of self and interpersonal communication.

By "thinking on paper" students can concentrate and direct their energies; they can think selected topics through deliberately and in their own terms. Freewritten journal entries encourage spontaneous impressions, frank disclosures, creativity, and an intuitive sense of direction. Multiple drafts and revisions of compositions require careful reconsideration, deeper understanding, and clearer purpose. No longer is writing merely an exercise to satisfy the instructor: it is an access to one's self, an avenue into others.

2) In Interpersonal Communication classes, students examine and try out new skills through a variety of course assignments: self-scrutiny exercises, group discussions, shared experiences, classroom simulations, reports and observation papers. These specific activities are selected and controlled by teachers to reduce students' fears of failure and ridicule. The learners' vulnerabilities when attempting new skills are minimized and opportunities for support and encouragement are multiplied in the sheltered environment of the classroom. These activities are useful but only brief introductions to the complexities of interpersonal communication. Students need more sustained and sustaining activities that permit them to earn understanding and a measure of confidence, both of which are fundamental before students learn and employ new communication skills.

Writing, in the extended self-talk and rumination of journals, enables students to come to terms with and sort through their perceptions, feelings, attitudes, behaviors, and relationships privately. When students do feel prepared to share them in compositions, the team teachers conference individually with them and provide the support of a trusting, coaching relationship. Conferencing propels students out of the usually passive classroom mode--merely listening and watching--into active interaction with the teacher. The undivided attention and interest demonstrated by the teachers for students and for what they have to communicate, not only encourages students' written communication skills but interpersonal skills as well. The students' sense of self worth is reinforced.

This sense of worth is not jeopardized by teachers' propensities to advise, criticize, and evaluate student

compositions when writing is taught as a process. Each draft of a paper is an experiment, a preliminary sketch of the composition gradually taking shape. Revision is a tool always at hand. Guidelines to the writing process [appended] are provided to students. With a method and directions accessible to them, students can begin to absorb the writing process, concentrate their minds fully on complex thinking processes without feeling lost, attempt new skills, identify and practice specific thinking and writing skills, and comprehend and anticipate the teachers' grading criteria. The guidelines (focusing on content, point of view, audience, organization, style, and mechanics) remind students/writers to follow the sequential steps in the composing process and also remind teachers/coaches to direct their responses to the appropriate stage of composing.

The first concern of the writer is content: until students have something substantial to write, it matters little how well or correctly they write it. Freewriting and journals enable students to amass information quickly, to learn to rely on their own perceptions, and to "think on paper" so they can discover their attitudes and recognize their relationships to their topics. As the writer's point of view emerges (his attitude or relationship to the topic), it must be understood and stated precisely. The purpose of the composition, the thesis that the writer is prepared to support, is revealed. Audience (discussed more fully in the next section) connotes the critical transition in the writer's mind from what he knows to what a reader wants or needs to know if the composition is to communicate meaningfully. These complex interreactions among writer, topic, and audience resolve themselves into an organization that is logical and recognizable. Transitions make relationships clear. Only now that the writer knows exactly where the composition is going and how to get there is an introduction written to the audience, making the writer's intentions and purposes known. Stylistic and mechanical concerns are important, but central to the writer's thought only at the last. If they intrude from the beginning, they often block the thinking process which must be unimpeded if the complicated relationships among writer, topic, and audience are to be communicated skillfully. Moreover, mechanical concerns frequently loom largely and darkly in students' pasts, clouding any confidence that they have something meaningful to write.

Although the guidelines' primary purpose is to conduct students through the process of written communication, they also provide productive counterpoint to understanding interpersonal communication. Content is what students encode and choose to disclose of their perceptions, emotions, attitudes, beliefs, behaviors, and relationships. Point of view is relating self to content and to perceived audience. Communicators must examine their images of self, content,

and audience. Specific issues such as defensiveness, self disclosure, empathy, and credibility are active influences in determining point of view. These issues are central whether the method of transmission is oral or written. In much the same way that the writer's attention to or neglect of mechanical skills affects his credibility as well as the audience's consideration and interpretation of the message, the "noise" resulting from projection, articulation, psychological and nonverbal factors influences interpersonal communication.

3) There is little justification, and students know it, for classroom instruction that does not relate what they are learning to their lives. By combining English Composition and Interpersonal Communication, students have the time and incentive to pursue incipient communication skills beyond lectures, readings, discussions, simulations, and brief observations and to put them into practice. With two weeks or more to commit to each written assignment, students will employ the "no-lose" approach to resolve a personal conflict, experience and evaluate a role reversal, carefully analyze an emotion and a relationship. Textbooks and classroom work do prepare students to learn by providing introductions, but they are not how students learn. By testing and using new skills, students discover what they must do if they are to learn. They may even discover that they have the ability and responsibility to fashion their own communication skills.

Composition teachers are severely challenged to find applications for writing skills independent of the classroom. Some students have or foresee occupational uses, a few may write to publications or public agencies, and other may have to complete resumes or letters of application. However many have not recognized that their composing skills serve a useful purpose beyond satisfying teachers' assignments. When writing on interpersonal communication topics, students use the organizing strategies of composition as tools that enable them to understand and describe themselves and their relationships more accurately, to define their attitudes and beliefs, to uncover some causes and effects of their behaviors, to analyze their emotions, to compare and contrast the merits of communication skills, and to present logically the impact of changing perceptions they have experienced. Most importantly, then, students use writing as a means of self-exploration, purposeful thinking, and directing change. By composing their thoughts on paper for themselves first, students can work in contexts and at levels of disclosure that are appropriate for them.

As students continue the writing process, their objective widens to communicating skillfully with others: to impart information, to evoke responses, to influence minds, and to change behaviors. Writing, like oral communication, is often motivated by the desire and need to communicate inter-

personally. Therefore, students continue to revise and edit their compositions in order to express themselves distinctively, coherently, and meaningfully to others. Students are responsible for selecting specific topics and for shaping their compositions to their own purposes, but they must also designate and address an audience. Sometimes students know from the beginning which audience they desire to communicate with. Often, however, the writing process leads students to their audience. An audience emerges from the interplay of how much students know about their topics and how convincingly they can communicate their knowledge, by which judgments students make and which attitudes they reveal, by what thesis they can support and what audience they can interest, move, or inform.

Students are encouraged to select an audience that offers challenges and that fulfills their need to communicate. The teacher is never the audience, thereby avoiding the role of taskmaster. Students do not write just what a teacher wants to read; instead, with the teacher's guidance, students learn how to communicate effectively with the audience they have chosen.

4) The compensations of team teaching accrue to both courses and enhance students' opportunities to learn. In Interpersonal Communication, students have the benefit of two instructional perspectives. Team teaching demonstrates that there are no "right answers" to human communication predicaments, no "right ways" to feel, perceive, interpret, or communicate. In the classroom varying points of view do exist and are respected; complexities are admitted and allowed to challenge; controversies arise and remain unresolved. No single instructional authority dominates. Moreover, the interaction between teachers reduces students' reticence to enter discussions, thereby eliciting sharing and debate. Student response in the classroom shifts from passive acceptance to active thought and participation. While team teaching, the instructors can demonstrate active listening, supportive behavior, building and maintaining positive relationships, assertiveness, positive self concepts, empathy, and the productive resolution of conflict. The classroom becomes a workshop where interpersonal communication skills are displayed and practiced enthusiastically.

In addition, two teachers can coordinate their individual abilities, share assignments, and pool their resources. When working together, teachers more readily revise and refine their own approaches, provide better instruction, and are more alert and responsive to student needs. Yet not even two teachers can interact sufficiently and respond appropriately to their students' many interpersonal communication needs. This is an unfortunate irony for a course devoted to interpersonal communication. But the opportunities are too

limited and students' interests and concerns too complex and varied.

However, the added time and conferencing format of English Composition provide further opportunities for students and teachers to apply and practice their interpersonal skills. By employing the one-to-one conferencing approach, individuals develop sharing and trusting relationships much more readily. Active listening, nonverbal communication, appropriate self-disclosure, being not seeming, and empathy are transformed from abstract concepts into behaviors and skills that affect classroom communication and relationships.

In Composition, as in the Interpersonal Communication classroom, team teaching offers advantages. Team teachers can spend more conferencing time with students and can respond more promptly when students seek reactions. Each teacher provides an individual response to students' written and interpersonal endeavors. Differences between instructors are recognized, and the students must evaluate and reach their own decisions. Both teachers are available throughout the composing process and conference repeatedly on preliminary writings, revisions, and final drafts as students practice and improve communication skills--both written and interpersonal.

5) When team-taught, Composition and Interpersonal Communication provide more effective learning opportunities than either can without the other: communication skills can develop from study skills to applied skills. Students recognize their growing proficiency in writing as their successes with "thinking on paper" accumulate, as the writing process becomes internalized, as they improve their composing skills, as they accomplish the varied and difficult purposes they set out for themselves, and as they communicate effectively to the many audiences they have chosen to address. Students' confidence in their ability to use writing as a learning tool is bolstered when, near the end of the semester, they progress from compositions based on their perceptions and interpretations to a research project. The additional skills of finding research materials, selecting sources, collecting information, narrowing a topic, organizing data, marshalling support, and presenting authoritative evidence convincingly give students confidence that they can continue using, improving, and learning their writing skills independently. This research project also provides an occasion for students to delve deeply into one topic in the field of communication, a luxury not otherwise accorded in Interpersonal Communication courses.

While they were conceiving, shaping, and revising their compositions, students' minds and energies were concentrated in understanding and applying the skills of interpersonal communication. They were able to consider, test, and practice these skills more fully than students who do not

have the advantage of the team-taught classes. Because of their experiences, as well as the feedback and support they have received in both courses, students are better prepared to continue using and improving the skills of supportive behavior, empathy, active listening, appropriate self-disclosure, no-lose problem solving, and nonverbal communication.

Interpersonal Communication and English Composition share a common purpose of preparing students for the communication opportunities and demands of college as well as beyond the classroom. In both courses the needs and rewards of self-awareness and of communicating interpersonally, whether in written or spoken form, are paramount. These skills in thinking and communicating processes are vital for the educated person. As long as interpersonal and composition skills continue to serve students' needs, their confidence in these skills will grow and their proficiency will develop.

When English Composition and Interpersonal Communication combine, how tight the fit? The medium and the message, while not quite one, are nonetheless inseparable.

Appended items follow:

- Composition writing assignment list
- Writing process guidelines
- Composition final examination
- Student responses to examination

ENGLISH COMPOSITION WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

JOURNALS AND ESSAYS

You will write in a journal regularly, recording observations, experiences, insights, behaviors, and ideas that relate to interpersonal communication. These entries will be freewritten in order to generate and explore ideas and to serve as prewritings for your English compositions. It is much easier to keep up with essay assignments and to improve the quality of your writing when you use the journal as intended. Your journal should be kept in a folder and will be checked periodically. Date each entry and write at least 20 minutes, filling 1½ to 2 standard notebook pages. Read pages 211-17 in One to One for additional suggestions.

Essay assignments will develop from your study and practice of interpersonal communication skills. Essays should be based primarily on your own experiences and observations and should be a minimum of 600 words. Fill out self-critique sheets for each draft you show the instructor. You decide when a draft is final and ready for grading.

Journal #1 Write 2 entries on different assumptions underlying the theory of communication and 3 entries on the one you choose for your topic (Bridges Not Walls 48-51).

Example Essay Read Chapters 4 and 5 in One to One. Choose one of the assumptions underlying communication theory in this course and use it as the topic for your example paper. You may use either the typical or specific example form, or combine the two.

Journal #2 Write 5 entries that examine some elements of self-concept: appearance, talents/skills, intelligence, beliefs, feelings, social traits, gender roles, relationships, interests, ~~plans~~ dreams (Looking Out/Looking In 37-8).

Cause and Effect Essay Read Chapter 13 in One to One. Compose a cause and effect essay that examines a change in your self-concept. Consider what initiated the change, the resistance to change, and the results on others as well as yourself. Focus your paper on one of the elements listed above and refer to LO/LI pages 37-56.

Journal #3 Complete 5 entries analyzing interpersonal attraction: 1) similarity of interests, attitudes, values, backgrounds, 2) the fulfillment of complementary needs and a fair exchange of rewards, 3) the other's attraction to you, 4) frequency of encounters and the competent but human characteristics, 5) the sharing of personal information (refer to LO/LI 298-302).

Description Essay Read Chapter 14 in One to One. Describe in detail one encounter or event that effectively highlights some important bases of your attraction for a person with whom you share a strong, positive personal relationship.

Journal #4 Write 8 entries that follow the steps of no-lose problem-solving (LO/LI 352-57).

Comparison and Contrast Essay Read Chapters 8 and 9 in One to One. Use the no-lose problem solving approach to confront a problem you are experiencing and have been unable to solve. Compare and contrast your current approach with the no-lose.

Journal #5 Write 3 entries in which you discuss 3 types of non-listening you engage in, then 2 entries on examples of your active listening (LO/LI 222-23 and 242-52). [No essay]

Journal #6 Write 5 entries in which you record either the physiological, nonverbal, cognitive, and verbal components of a strong emotion you experience (LO/LI 257-63) or the benefits of appropriately expressing your emotions (265-69).

Classification Essay Choose either of the following for your classification essay:classify a strong emotion you experience by its physiological, nonverbal, cognitive, and verbal components or classify the benefits of appropriately expressing your emotions to another person.

Journal #7 Write 5 entries about your role reversal: 1) preliminary point of view, 2) expectations of role reversal, 3) impact of role reversal on you, 4) effect(s) on others, 5) overall assessment of the role reversal.

Induction Essay Read Chapters 15 and 16 in One to One. In class we will brainstorm on ways to alter physiological, social, gender, occupational, and cultural roles (LO/LI 96-111). Experience or become something that is foreign to you, as best you can to discover how it feels. Write an inductive essay that reveals the impact of the role reversal.

Journal #8 Write 2 entries to explore the meanings of 2 abstract terms and 3 entries on the word you choose for the essay (LO/LI 135-55). Keep the abstraction ladder in mind.

Definition Essay Read Chapter 12 in One to One. Write an extended definition essay that examines the meanings of a word at three levels of abstraction. Explore the connotations of the term as well as its denotations. In composing the essay employ several of the following strategies: use synonyms, give examples, discuss the word's origin, develop comparisons or analogies, tell what the word is not, create an anecdote to show the word in action, explain a process, describe the parts, discuss causes and effects. Explain not only how the word is commonly used but also your understanding and interpretation.

Journal #9 Write 3 entries of observations of nonverbal conventions and behaviors and 2 entries describing your and others' reactions when you deliberately violate nonverbal "rules." [No essay]

Book Review Read Chapter 21 in One to One and the course handout "Writing a Book Review." Review Looking Out/ Looking In, Bridges Not Walls, or another approved book. The steps presented in One to One provide a useful format to follow. Book reviews should be a minimum of 750 words.

NAME_____DATE_____ASSIGNMENT_____DRAFT_____

CONTENT: FIRSTHAND KNOWLEDGE (218-20)

CONCRETE EXAMPLES, ILLUSTRATIONS, FACTS, DETAILS (10-13, 33-37)

SENSE APPEAL: SPECIFIC NOUNS & MODIFIERS, ACTIVE VERBS (368-72, 273-76)

POINT OF VIEW: EXPLAIN YOUR RELATIONSHIP OR ATTITUDE TO THE MAIN TOPIC

THESIS OR CONTROLLING IDEA (134-47)

TONE (362-68)

AUDIENCE: IDENTIFY

WHAT YOUR AUDIENCE WANTS OR NEEDS TO KNOW (4-8, 345-53)

ORGANIZING METHOD (37-177)

PARAGRAPHING: STATE THE MAIN TOPICS (48-58)

TRANSITIONS (294-302)

INTRODUCTION (327-32)

CONCLUSION (314-16)

STYLE: CONCISE AND PRECISE (286-94, 333-41, 20-25)

VARIED SENTENCE STRUCTURE (361)

MECHANICS: (= checked carefully)

Consistent person (18)
Consistent verb tense (18-19)
Subject/verb agreem (276-78)
Pronoun agreement (278-79)
Sentence fragments (324-25)
Run-on sentences (310-11)
Punctuation (302-11, 354-60)
Possessives (279-81)
Capitalization (282-86)
Spelling (311-14)

What do you like most about your paper? Why?

English 1A
Jim Hopp & Buford Crites

FINAL EXAMINATION

COMPOSITION

DIRECTIONS: Answer both sections in an essay.

1) Throughout the semester writing has been presented and practiced as a process: recalling experiences, thinking on paper, developing a purpose, selecting and arranging information. In lectures, individual conferences, and in the text this process has been variously described as working from prewriting to rough drafting to revising to editing to final drafting; as developing from "writer-based" self-expression to "reader-based" communication; and as focusing on content, point of view, audience, organization, and finally mechanics. Explain and evaluate what you have learned of writing as a process, include your successes as well as the obstacles and frustrations you have faced.

2) The primary reason for team-teaching the two communication courses was so your writing would gain direction and purpose from your personal involvement with interpersonal communication and so your learning in the speech course would be enhanced by the thought and effort you put into your journals and compositions. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of this team-teaching approach for you.

Three students' responses to the final examination follow:

Student A

1) I have learned the basics to better writing. I came into class with much to say, but did not know how to properly put it down on paper in a form that could be understood by myself and another reader. Using writing as a process has let me focus my thoughts in a more fluid yet structured manner. Prior to this class I had never written in a form that had to consider reader-based writing. However, writing and revising each draft of my paper not only let me understand the steps necessary each time, and that the content as well as the mechanics were important to a good paper, but that as I refined each paper, my writing became cleaner and more enjoyable. I had never written a research paper prior to this class. I consider just learning the basics of a research paper a success, and it will more than help me in my future courses, as well as my career objectives. Learning a process I can use in the future for other things I may be called upon to write was also a personal success.

One of the obstacles I faced was that of time. In fact, because of the limited time I had available, I plan on taking some more writing courses when I have more time just to devote to writing. I did thoroughly enjoy learning how to be a better writer, and I do want to pursue that enjoyment.

Another obstacle as well as a frustration was my lack of knowledge about basic English grammar. However, that is an obstacle/frustration that can be overcome by taking some more courses that can brush up my skills. If the course had not involved a lot of writing and hard work, I probably would not have learned what I did. Nobody likes to work hard, but I think it will pay off in the long run.

2) The only disadvantage I see to team teaching is that more courses are not taught in the team teaching approach.

The advantages for me in team teaching, especially for a course that included English/Speech was that they provided focus: one-for-the-other. Team teaching allows for the benefit of two instructors, each capable in his/her field, while learning from, or complementing the other instructor. Two heads are always better than one, if they both work together to present the material. If the instructors don't make it work, it will probably fail.

The two course approach does allow for enhancement in each one. I thought at first if I could not write about trains, or what I did on my summer vacation, that the writing would be hard and boring. But being able to write about topics I was learning in another class was very helpful to both, and did help me in the learning process.

Another great advantage is to have two instructors help with my writing, and my learning of communication. Two instructors insure that everyone gets helped, and more

time can be spent with those of us who might be having a little more trouble than others.

I consider it a major success when I learn just one thing I did not know before, and learn how to apply it. I feel I have been taught and learned more than just one piece of information in both courses, and more importantly how to apply that information.

Additionally, it is always good to have more than one point of view in a course. Who knows, one point of view might be wrong.

I definitely recommend this team teaching course to anyone who has to take English and Speech. The instructors "ain't" too bad either.

Student B

1) Writing as a process has helped me learn to express myself and to communicate to others my feelings and experiences. The process of writing a rough draft was a good skill to pick up as I began to realize nothing is perfect the first time around. Writing a rough draft allowed me to explore new ideas, play with alternative methods and thoughts without judging or being too harsh on myself that it did not work out. In essence, writing a rough draft gave me more creative space. The prewriting helped me to let my thoughts flow. The idea of recording or writing down whatever pops into my mind gave me a lot of space to write down impressions without judging their validity or how I was going to use them. The first day I tried prewriting my senses were overwhelmed. The thoughts and impressions were coming quicker than I could write them down.

There were colors, scents, people, places, so much that I wanted to record on paper, so little time to record it all and categorize it. Thinking on paper has never been hard for me, but recalling some of my past experiences and recording them was at times painful.

The individual attention we received helped me a lot. Jim and Buford's enthusiasm for the topics they were teaching and the subject matter the students were writing was a saving grace that kept me going throughout the semester.

In the aspect of editing and final drafting which I needed a lot of help in, I found my fears of being judged were alleviated by the matter of fact way Jim and Buford pointed out errors. In high school I had had English instructors that after they had graded my papers I was afraid to write again because I knew it would be wrong, and I would dream and worry about those big red slashes all night long.

The kindness you both showed in reading my work and helping me edit it to its final draft form is greatly appreciated.

Going from the writer-based self expression to reader-based communication was a big step for me. I have always written for myself in the form of journals and poetry that I shared with no one else. To go from self expression to reader-based communication was very frightening and I was glad that I was able to practice and experience this transition in your class where a lot of positive input and kindness was

shown.

It was hard for me at times to find my audience because a lot of my reader-based communication was still to me a form of self expression. It was just self expression with some organization and a point of view.

I have learned to express myself much more easily. I am not so terrified or judgmental of my mistakes. When I first started this class I had terrible writer's block; I was very aware and frightened of all the grammatical errors I made when writing. When I realized my lack of knowledge was not a death sentence, my words and ideas once again started to flow more freely. And the words and expressions started to flow again like when I was a child.

When I was a child in the third grade I used to write stories every night. I had stacks of them hidden under my bed. One day I became brave enough to take them out and I proudly showed them to my mother. She promptly set me down and went over every mistake and said they were "horrible" stories and why would I ever write anything like that? I had a few mysteries in there.

My mother promptly called up a friend asking if I should be "psycho-analyzed." Maybe there was something wrong with me. She grabbed my writing up and ran over to her friend's house with it.

Thank God her friend re-assured her I was of a sane mind. I went to my room in tears and never wrote <u>for anyone again</u> -- except myself. Your class has helped me overcome these blocks, and your kindness and unjudgmental understanding has healed old wounds. Thank you.

2) I enjoyed the team teaching for two reasons -- you were offered two totally different opinions and the "one-on-one" relationship was enhanced because the team teaching lessened the ratio between students and teachers. I felt the workload in both of the classes was at times difficult, but I felt by combining them and constantly working with the information, I retained more than I would have if I had taken the classes separately. Now that I am at the end of the semester, instead of in the middle, I can look back and say without hesitation that I have grown from the experience and if offered the choice I would do it all over again.

<u>Student C</u>

1) I feel that my greatest improvement was making the transition from writer-based material to reader-based. Previously, I was accustomed to writing only for myself. Now, with the added perspective of an audience, I have developed a better ability to convey my expressions so that others can understand. However, I realize that this is a small beginning for me and I intend to continue writing to further improve my abilities.

I am grateful to Mr. Hopp and Mr. Crites for their personal attention. I found their feedback priceless, since their objective observations provided me with broader perspectives, new ideas and approaches. I can honestly say, it is a rare occurrence for the instructors to be so willing

to work with the students.

My most frustrating barrier is the composition of an opening. I am still not sure whether all pieces warrant a highly structured beginning. It appears silly to me to devise a corny beginning, perhaps because I prefer to be much more dramatic and dive right in. Also, when composing essays for future courses, I am unsure if it is necessary to focus on an audience other than the instructor. I will inevitably find out.

The lecture material from the Communication portion provided endless potential ideas for me. At times, I found it difficult to choose a particular topic from the numerous ideas that came to mind. However, writing in the journals was beneficial in selecting a topic. Once I did, I discovered a mental process that was necessary in order to write so that the reader could share my experience. By consciously regressing back to the certain situation that I wished to write about, provided me with substance and particulars for the piece. This was a relatively new experience for me, so it is very hard to explain. It is almost a state of meditation by immersing myself in a certain experience and discovering observations that had gone unnoticed, although registered in and by my mind.

Another weakness of mine is my inability to outline an essay prior to the rough draft. I feel that my research paper would have been better organized if I had developed a structure on paper rather than in my head. I also learned, the hard way, that if I had had a written outline, my research would have been less time-consuming and more focused.

My only complaint is the number of essays that were required. I spent an enormous amount of time writing, and it did interfere with my other classes. Perhaps it was due to my own inexperience. Hopefully in the future, with the knowledge I have gained, I will be a more proficient writer.

2) As I stated earlier, the personal attention from both instructors was the most valuable aspect of the course. However, being that they are two different individuals, there are times when they give conflicting opinions, understandably so! I made an effort to consider the input of each, then drew my own conclusions. This is really the only disadvantage that I encountered as far as the team teaching goes. The responsibility lies more on the students rather than the instructors to deal with this.

The advantages by far outweigh any minor disadvantages. The unique communication material provides a variety of ideas to write on, which reinforces the concepts. The integration of the two courses made it a very personal experience for me, and it was truly a pleasure to be exposed to both instructors' ideas.